ROB McGREGOR

A TALE OF TENNESSEE By Martha McCulloch Williams Copyright, 1806. By the Author.

"Yes - ho - 3 don't hardly know. | You've got me finstered with your fine talk. But I'll tell you plain jest whar an how I stan with her. I been thar this mornin; found her so took up with er passel er nasty little turkeys I couldn't seasely git er word with her. She peared moughty bright, though, sorter on aidge, as you may say. So I waited, talkin ter the ole man, until I seen her slip off out ter the p'ar trees. Then I chased off arter her; found her flingin sticks an rocks up in 'em an p'ars jest rainin down at every throw she made. Then she up an said how lazy she was -any industrious body'd climb an pick the fruits enbruised, as they was fer p'serves. Then I up an said I'd git up thar, though I wa'n't quite er boy, an

she laughed real tantalizin an said she couldn't let the father er a fam'ly resk hisself that way. Then she kep' on throwin an set me ter pick up what sho knocked down. An laugh! You oughter er heard her when them fruits come dancin an hoppin over my bald head. But arter a bit she says: 'Let's go in the grape arbor an rest.

I'm 'fraid you'll have apoplexy. I cain't have your death on my conscience." "So in we went an set on the two turf

benches, her one side, me the other. She had her apern full er p'ars an flung one over ter me, sayin: ' 'Have er p'ar, Mr. Topmark. I'm

shore you've carned it.' "Then I sorter aidged round ter lettin en I wanted ernother sort er p'ar, an she flung up her head an laughed an

"'Oh, Mr. Topmark, jest fer er change, now, s'pose you was ter talk sense ter me! I know it would improve your health.'

" 'Oh,' says I, 'then you wanter talk business? I'm agreeable. Jest you fire "An she says, lookin over my head, 'I can't talk your sorter business, 'cause

I ain't got none er my own, an other folks' is clean out er the question. 'Why,' says I, 'everybody thinks you've got er heap er business-heap too] much fer er pretty young thing like

"An then she held up her hand, sayin: 'Stop! You know business is buyin an sellin an payin debts. Now, I've nothin ter buy right now, thank God, next ter nothin ter sell sence the colt was stole an not er debt in the world. In fact, I can't git in debt. Nobody'd trust me fer 10 cents. They know they couldn't tetch the land fer it-that's all we've got-an I'd shoot the man that would name sale er mortgage ter dad-

" 'You oughter be rich with all this land,' says I, 'Wouldn't you like ter he? It's with er fortune of it was managed

"Then she thought or minit an flung her arms over her head, sayin: 'Yes, I do want money, er heap of it, ernough to make some rascals suffer an give daddy an the dogs an all the black folks er good time.

'You ain't namin nothin fer yourself, I says. 'Shorely you want some thin ef it ain't no mo'n fine weddin

"An then she laughed-she's jest like quicksilver-an says she: 'Oh, Mr. Topmark, Mr. Topmark! How can you tantalize me so! You know ef ever I fall in love with anybody he'll be shore ter have mothers an sisters an consins an aunts that'll bate me on the face er earth. They'll eben hate the ground I walk on; so I'll have ter dry up inter the ugliest little old maid. I reckon I'll blow away in the end. Thar ain't no chance er me dyin, like anybody ought when they're crossed in love. You ought ter be sorry fer me instid er makin me sorry fer myself.

'No, I'm sorry fer myself,' says I. You've done sawed me off short every tetch, but I'm bound ter say er feller that could git you wouldn't mind of all the other women in the world was mad ernough ter die over it.'

'I oughter say thanky, sir,' says 'But I thought we'd agreed tor talk sense.

" 'Oh, no, ' says I. 'It was business, an, whether er no, I mean ter tell you my comin here so much means business. Then I drapped on my knees an tried ter git er hold of her hand, but she jumped erway an flung er handful er them p'ar fruits right in my face. One of 'em was so meller it stuck on the end er my nose, an when she seen that she laughed till she cried. But soon she set her head up, an says she in her high

" 'I don't wanter seem inhospitable, Mr. Topmark, but you must know that you can never have anything ter say ter me that would not be better said where all the world might hear it. Good day, sir! I cain't ask you in the house, I have got a heap er other things ter do. And with that she left me so mad I couldn't see straight, not knowin hardly whether I'd ruther kill her er ask her ter walk on me."

"It must have tried your temper—such impertinence," Mr. Howell said, yet laughed behind his hand at the thought of Mr. Topmark with the pear on his nose. "Pardon me if I seem impertinent," he went on, "but you had better tell me your whole mind toward the other one. Miss Magnolia Tubbs is not bad looking, but she impresess me as being-well, a trifle hard mouthed and more than a trifle skittish."

"You're right. But she's got her match—that thar Noch. He's the devil. Besides, he's got the upper hand. The gal's been unfortunit. Thar's or child. you see. Till I found that out thar might er been two choices fer me. Noch wouldn't have the land as er gracious gift, so she-Magnolyer-is crazy ter git money. Say, you go right over ter Roscoe termorrer mornin. Ask fer the ole man. Ef you insist you won't talk only ter him, it'll skeer that little vixen wusser'n anything. But don't tell him. Talk ter her. Don't beat erbout the bush. Say right out you've been asked ter take the case an how I've tried ter keep you from tetchin it an only give in after you promised ter try an comper-miss. Name er whoppin big sum. Say \$5,000, though I'll git the thing settled fer \$2,000. Say I begged an plead with you ter let the ole man at least live out his days in peace, an you'd like ter do

ain't the only lawyer''—
"One would think I was hardly a lawyer from the minuteness of your instructions," Mr. Howell said, bringing his chair down upon all its four legs. "I think I can be trusted with the diplomatic part. What I want is a clear statement of facts and your connection with them. "

"In jest so many words the facts is these," Mr. Topmark said: "Roscoe land was took up from gov'ment survey with money her father had give that ole woman, Naomi Pickins, when she got married. Ef she ever j'ined in the deeds ter the McGregors, thar ain't no papers ner records ter prove, though the Me-Gregors say she did do it. But the only



An when she seen that she laughed till she cried." oe knowin ter that is the ole man hisself, an Rob won't let him be pestered with this of she kin any way help it. Now, yere comes Naomi Pickins' gran'daughter, Magnolyer Tubbs, only heir so fer's I know, wantin ter git her rights. But she don't want the land, an I do. I want likewise the gal that thinks she owns it an know I cain't git her unless I work my files pretty sharp. She cain't fight the case. Law an jestice cost money. That she ain't got. Ef she'll let me stan' her friend"-

"But if she will not let you stand her friend, and if Magnolia should discover how much better a bargain she could make"- Mr. Howell began, but Topmark cut him short.

"I'll git the land, no matter what Rob McGregor does," he said, rising heavily. "That's certain. As fer that other one, you don't know Noch. Ef she turned rusty, he'd think nothin er puttin her out in the swamp, with er knife ereross her throat, like he's done -well, some other things. An Noch, he dassen't git me down on him. No, sir-ee! I know too much."

"Then it is settled that I make a first move tomorrow?" Mr. Howell asked, also rising. He did not mark the sudden, curious grayness about Topmark's mouth, but he wondered a little that it was a full minute before that gentleman answered slowly:

"Yes, an ef you bring back word that wuth \$50 extry ter you when we com ter settle."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Mr. Howell came back from Roscoe with the look of a whipped hound, though he brought Mr. Topmark the wished for message. But when he had delivered it he went on: "You have not got a nice job before you, Topmark. That young woman will not be bullied, even by you. Confound her! She came nearer putting me in a blue funk than ever a supreme judge did. I shall not know whether to envy or pity you if you get your own way with her, of which I have my doubts."

Mr. Topmark was more hopeful when he saw Rob, white and heavy eyed. She made no pretense of greeting, but went straight at the heart of things. "I want money, \$5,000," she said. "You know what for. Will you let me have it and take the land for it when it comes to be mine?

"Well, you see, \$5,000 is er heap er money, er mighty heap er money," Mr. Topmark answered slowly. "It would be the wust sort er thing fer my business ter sink that much in er remainder in trus'. But then thar ain't nothin hardly I won't try ter do ter 'blige good neighbors. Fact is, I been tryin ter jew down that thar lawyer. I told him he hadu't no conscience whatever"-

"So he said," Rob broke in. "Excuse me, but I am so anxious. "Mr. Topmark, please say simply yes or no. If you cannot oblige me, I must try elsewhere. I sent for you because I know you have ready money. Besides the place lies so it is worth more to you than most people."

"Yes, I'm bound ter say it is," Mr. Topmark admitted impartially, with the air of one conferring a favor. "But, you see, er remainder in trus'- I ain't meanin the least disrespec', Miss Rob. I know your word's better'n er bond. But the place won't be yours till the ole gentleman's gone. S'posin you died

"You shall not suppose such a thing," Rob said, with a quick shiver. "To do it would be to deny the mercy of God. I shall live to take care of him. I will do it in spite of everything. What you have said, though, shows me the case is hopeless, so far as it concerns you. I can only beg your pardon for having tronbled you.

"You know it ain't no trouble, not the least. Why, Miss Rob, I'd do jest anything fer you an glad er the chance, Mr. Topmark said eagerly. "Now, don't you fret an think you're goin ter be turned out er house an home. That shan't never happen while Ben Topmark's yours ter command"-

"Excuse me. You must know I cannot accept any but such help as may come strictly in the way of business, Rob said, her eyes beginning to shine. "Forgive me if I seem bold, Mr. Top mark, but I must say in justice to my self that in thus applying to you I took account not of your gallantry, but of your well known shrewdness. I am offering you for \$5,000 what I know you want very much and otherwise would

not get at all."
"You mean jest Roscoe, I s'pose,"
Mr. Tonmark said. grinning. "I do

want it, Miss Rob, but, Low, not balf, not er hundredth part, as bad as I want you. Now, don't you try ter stop me. You sent fer me, remember. I got er right ter speak. I know you don't keer nothin in the world erbout me, an I'm er fool ter keep on arter you like I do. I ain't no handsome young sprig ter take your fancy. Neither I ain't er p'ison snake. So you jest say you'll eben consider me, an I pledge you my word you shan't have no mo' trouble with this yere rescally gang''-

"Thank you, but that is wholly impossible," Rob said, a deep scarlet staining her pallid free, "so impossible," she went on, "we will forget what you

have said." "What makes it impossible?" Topmark asked doggetly.

Rob shivered faintly, then drew back, saying, "The fact that I am myself and you yourself.

"You're the only woman round yer I couldn't have fer the askin," Mr. Top mark began in his most aggrieved voice In spite of her deep trouble, Rob broke into a laugh and answered gayly: "I have not the least doubt of it. Dear Mr. Topmark, do go and take one of them. You don't know how guilty I shall feel if I think myself the occasion of so excelient a busband going to waste."

Her laughing provoked Mr. Topmark beyond words, more than even ber steadfast refusal of himself. She could thus whistle him and his money down the wind with ruin staring her in the face. It must be she did not realize what she was about. He had spoken fair words. Now he must try what virtue lay in rough ones. "You say you love your ole father,"

he began. "Thar won't be many ter believe that when they see him in the poorhouse an know you could er kept him out er it.' "Perhaps," Rob said, though she got white to the lips. "But it seems to me,

Mr. Topmark, we had better say no more. We are not likely to agree, and it is utterly foolish to quarrel." "We must agree on somethin er else it'll be the wust day's work was ever done fer you an him," Mr. Topmark almost shouted. "You think, I reckon, other help will come. I tell you it won't, it shan't. I can give you er name as will shet every door in the

county in your face. Now, take your choice-be my wife, have all that life kin give er else the road an the world lookin at you as the dust under its feet! Choose quick too. You've tried me long ernough." "Choice is impossible," Rob said, her face white and scornful, "since nothing

else on earth could be to me so hard, so degrading, so entirely unbearable, as even the contemplation for one minute of being your wife." Mr. Topmark swung upon his heel and came face to face with Aunt Phemy. who had been standing just outside the grape arbor throughout the interview. The old woman was still speechless. Otherwise she showed no sign of the

she wants ter see me right off it'll be cowardly midnight attack. Rob had almost forced her to come and share Mam Liza's house in a corner of the yard. She had been shelling peas in the arbor while Rob talked with the lawyer that morning. Now she stood looking at Mr. Topmark with the eye of a basilisk. Thrice she nodded at him, then raised her hand and pointed him away. "Out er my way, you ole witch!" he shouted, rushing past her. Rob had sunk, shaken and breathless, upon the

turf seat within. The old woman went to her and softly stroked her head, then took the girl's face between her two hands and looked into the eyes as though she tried to comfort ber. A tail shadow fell across the sunny

door. Jack Talbot came through it and sat down beside Rob, saying: "My mysterious passenger sent you a

nessage, Rob-a message more mysterious than even himself. He bade me say to you, 'Darkness is coming, with light behind.' What do you make of that?

Do you think he was crazy?"
"I hepe not," Rob said, trying to speak steadily. "The darkness has come, Jack, quickly enough. Let us hope the light will follow.'

Before Jack could answer Aunt Phemy caught Rob's hand and kissed it. with smiles all over her deeply wrinkled

Fate sometimes disposes of her mightiest men by means of trifles light as air. Not that Miss Winfold was a trifle. Perish the insinuation! But if Lawyer Howell had not chosen to ride abroad just when and where he did, he would certainly not have encountered her and -and- But let the event be duly chronicled.

The lawyer rode, soliloquizing, half aloud: "George, but Topmark is a jolly fool! He thinks he can tame that pretty piece of pride. Confound it! I wish I had not seen her. I want to throw up the case when I think of her eyes. Of course I shall not do it. But who without seeing her would ever understand Topmark's infatuation? The wonder is that, having seen her, I no longer wonder over it. She might be dangerous to me, only she sees too far into me. Then there is that stubborn fact-Jack Talbot. Only a fool would overlook him. But the other one, Topmark's nieceshe's almost as astonishing, considering the stock she springs from. What a way she has! It was worth a lot to see how she cooed and purred the other night. I

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might think of calling Tire, thiy 1 hope to get out of this tomorrow at the latest,"

Sound of other hoofs here made him slacken speed. His road ran into another some 20 yards away. Through the thin growth of the intervening point be saw Miss Winfold, mounted upon the tall, gray, family horse, with Major, a scrap of black boy, up behind. At sight of Mr. Howell he set up an atrocious suigger, crying aloud: "Miss Alice! Miss Alice! Dar do ve'y man Marse Ben took'n fotch ter we all's house t'urrer night, de man frum town mammy say she s'peet gwine out out all your yother

"You, Major, hush, this minutel" Miss Winfold said, her face taking on a brick dust hue. She had taken stock of Mr. Howell upon their first encounter, and her mind was made up that, failing Jack Talbot, she could do no better than marry him. She was unfeignedly glad of the chance that threw him in her way, but maiden modesty, as she understood it, ferbade her to seem conscious of his presence until unconse was no longer possible. Even after they had exchanged greetings she kept a distant front toward him until he drew directly beside her, saying, with a lazy laugh:

"Miss Winfold, you must be here as a direct answer to prayer. I was thinking of you, and, behold, I look up and

"On, indeed! Now, I wonder what you were thinkin of poor me unless you were wonderin how you managed to talk to such a little goose," Miss Win-fold said, with an arch lift of her brows.

"What a slander!" laughed the lawyer, and at once rode on beside her. He was in the humor to see what was under and within this undulant plumpness. The girl lacked fascination wholly, but he seemed to discern in her a quality of subtle subservience which might mean much to a career such as he had mapped out for himself.

Still, nothing might have come of it but for Major, though he was the un-likeliest possible Cupid. "Dat boy, he dest gut ter be mean er bust,' mother habitually said of him, and just now be was ill content with the estate in which he found himself. There was smal chance for mischief riding thus withe six inches of Miss Winfold's immacuiare and starched pink shouldersunless, that is, one had Major's genius for it. By the time they had gone a mile in Mr. Howell's company the lad had found a long pin which he recalled having hidden that morning somewhere in his woolly crown. Next minute he had thrust it into old gray so sharply that that sober animal gave a great bound, and Miss Winfold lay in a heap upon the

Major was there, too, a moaning lump of arms and legs. But Mr. Howell took no thought of him. He knelt beside Miss Winfold, noting even in that distracted minute how firmly the neat flaxen braids sat in place. As he slid an arm beneath her head she opened her eyes and gasped faintly, "Water, water!" then collapsed against the arm from whose support she had chastely withdrawn herself.

"Water, water!" Major echoed in precisely her key.
"Shut up! You are not hurt, you

monkey!" Mr Howell said masterfully. "I does bleebe I kin walk," Major answered, with a grin; then, darting nimbly to the roadside: "Dest you run ter Miss Alice, Mr. Man! I gwine fetch er whole bucketful er water soon as eber

down at the round cheek against his shoulder. It was soft and smooth, trebly tempting to lips lacking the chrism of love. He stooped and kissed it. Then instantly the pale eyes opened with a glance that he could not misread. He had met artifice and cunning fit to cope with his own. He smiled a little behind his mustache and said as he led her horse to the roadside, where she stood ready to remount:

"That was a lucky overset. Without it we might have wasted six months in coming to an understanding."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Rheumatism Quickly Cured.

After having been confined to the house for eleven days and paying out \$25 in doctor bills without benefit. Mr. Frank Dolson of Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., was cured by one bottle of Chamberlain's Pain Balm, costing 25 cents and has not since been troubled with that complaint. For sale by A. R. Fisher,

MATTINGLY.

Held over from last week.

More rain, more rest.

Some of the Democrats are on the sick

Thos. Riley, Tar Fork, left for Texas, last Pad Bates has gone to Mattoon, Ill.

where he will work this year. Miss Sallie Perkins, Beech Fork, gave

us a short visit, last week. Miss Maggie Hambleton and her little niece, Mamie Hawkins, were in town,

W. C. Taul, Beech Fork, was through this community, last week, purchasing

Are you reading "Bob McGregor" in

the News? If you are not, you are missing a good thing Misses Ida and Eather Frank visited at far Fork, Saturday and Sunday. They

were guests of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Rice. Misses Effic Hambleton and Bessie Orum; Messrs. M. E. Hambleton and James Taul visited on Beech Fork, Satur. day and Sunday.

The Democrats I ave a complete ticket of popular candidates, and they are going to make the 'Pube' think of old times in November.

Wick Barbee, formerly of Cloverport, now of this place, will cultivate his uncle Wm Howard's farm, on Clover Creek, this year. Wick says he will keep batch,

Yes, ye think confidence is restored and times are improving rapidly since the Inauguration, for there was a gentleman from Clover Creek, in this commu nity, a few days ago, offering \$8 per month for a first-class farm hand.



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BEWLEYVILLE.

There is at present plenty of rain and

Glen Hardaway attended meeting at Big Spring Sunday night

The Epworth League held a devotional meeting Funday night.

Bro. Smith's remarks on temperance were always to the point and we feel that we need to wake up on this subject Hon, Chas, Blanford left Wednesday for Frankfort

Miss Mary Richardson, who has been visiting Mis Mary Blanford the past two weeks, returned home Saturday.

Our Missionary Society did well this quarter, but there are enough who do not help us to more than double our contributions. The next meeting will be Wednesday p. m. before the fourth Sunday, at the home of our President, Mrs. Blanford.

The Bewleyville wing of the Irvington Bay View Circle, attended the meeting of the same held in the Baptist church over there Thursday the 4th p. m. A good crowd was assembled, which we believe were entertained nicely But the return home, well truly the "rain descended." I give my support when I can, and my well wishes always to enterprises of this kird.

The protracted meeting at this place closed Sunday Mar. 14th. It was conducted by Bros. J. J. Smith, Prather, and Denton, who are noble, courageous workers and they have done a great work for Bewleyville. Not that many have been converted, but there has been a spiritual uplift such as we do not often I gits back from Unc' Joe Tom's house." | have. The meeting increased in interest As he vanished Mr. Howell looked all the while and it seemed almost

Dangers of the Grip.

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6 45am 11 53am 6 05pm
11 15am 5 53pm 11 05pm
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of Wall street.

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